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FREUD AND ARCHEOLOGY: THE FREUDIAN METAPHOR

I was brought up in an East European Jewish family where jokes and anecdotes are necessary elements of every conversation. I must have been around seven years old when I heard my aunt telling a joke to my mother about two funny-named men, Sisyphus and Oedipus. I was a "perceptive kid" — as my grandmother used to call me — who normally understood jokes, even those which I was not supposed to. This one, however, made no sense to me. I could have just given up upon it, but those names fascinated me: Sisyphus and Oedipus — I had never heard of them before. So I asked my mother who these two people were and if she would explain the joke to me. As it soon turned out, it was one of those "nicht vor dem Kind"¹ jokes, playing on Freudian connotations. However, I was used to the openness-policy of my father, so I expected an honest explanation. My mother had no difficulties in explaining the story of Sisyphus: a child of that age can easily relate to someone who tries to achieve something that is seemingly impossible to do. But how can anyone explain the story of Oedipus to a seven-year-old?

That was the first time I heard the name Oedipus. It is only now, many years later, that I finally understand Oedipus' story, too.

Freud and his Antiquities

Freud was seventy-five years old when he confessed to his close friend, Stefan Zweig, that "I have sacrificed a great deal for my collection of Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities, and have actually read more archaeology

¹ A turn-of-the-century saying which is still very fashionable in Jewish families. It means "not in front of the child" and generally refers to something sexual. The point of my aunt's joke has to do with Oedipus's sin to make his mother his own.

than psychology.² The person behind this quote is not the commonly known Sigmund Freud “Founder of Psychoanalysis,” but the lesser-known Freud collector of antiquities, student of archeology. Freud was interested in antiquities and archeological sites not simply for their aesthetic beauty — like the average *fin-de-siècle* collector — but also because of their concern with history, whether of the individual or of mankind as a whole.

In more than forty years of his life, Freud had gathered together a considerable amount of antiquities. The correspondence with his friend and colleague, Dr. Wilhelm Fliess, informs us of his earliest acquisitions. Freud reported to him as early as 1896: “I have decorated my study with plaster copies of Florentine statues.”³ These objects were most likely casts of antique sculptures in the Uffizi. After this first mention, as his financial situation got more and more stable, Freud started to acquire originals from ancient Rome, Greece, Egypt and, eventually, he obtained some Chinese antiquities. By 1914 his collection had already reached such proportions that Freud began to catalogue it.⁴ In later years the collection was supplemented by gifts from friends and patients. Conversely, Freud was ready to give them away as presents, or swap them for others. By the late thirties the collection contained over 3,000 objects which filled the consulting room and the adjoining study of his Vienna apartment at Berggasse 19.

The further growth of the collection was interrupted by the *Anschluss* in 1938 when Austria became a part of Nazi Germany. The Freuds — as other Jewish families — had always taken anti-Semitism for granted; they had lived with it as if it was “a part of Vienna, just like the Prater and the cafes,”⁵ but now it became brutal and unpredictable. The eighty-two-year-old Freud’s last wish was to “die in freedom.”⁶ So after a long Nazi harassment which included a break-in at his home and a day-long arrest of his daughter Anna, Freud and his family decided to leave Vienna for London. A couple of months before their emigration, the Viennese photographer, Ed-

² Freud to Stefan Zweig (February 7, 1931), in *Letters of Sigmund Freud, 1873-1939*, ed. Ernst and Lucian Freud, tr. Tania and James Stern (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1961), p. 47.

³ Freud to Fliess (December 6, 1896), in *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess 1887-1904*, ed. and trans. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985) [hereafter Freud to Fliess].

⁴ This catalogue has not survived.

⁵ Edmund Engelman, “A Memoir,” in *Berggasse 19: Sigmund Freud’s Home and Offices, Vienna 1938 — The Photographs of Edmund Engelman*, intr. Peter Gay, caps. Rita Ransohoff (New York: Basic Books, 1972), p. 131.

⁶ Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life For Our Time* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1988), p. 629.

mund Engelman, was asked to make an exact document of Berggasse 19, in case the whole collection got confiscated by the Nazis. "I was amazed by the unbelievable number of art objects," writes Engelman in his memoires, "there was nothing of the popular Austrian Baroque or Biedermeyer art; there were only antiquities of great age — Roman, Egyptian, Assyrian, and Etruscan. Wherever one looked, there was a glimpse into the past."⁷

It was through great difficulties that the collection finally found its way to Freud's house in London at Maresfield Gardens. Here, the maid arranged the antiquities in much the same way as it had been at Berggasse 19. However, Freud's letter to his ex-patient Jeanne Lampl de Groot shows the double-sidedness of his feelings towards his newly received collection: "All the Egyptians, Chinese and Greeks have arrived, have stood up to the journey with very little damage, and look more impressive here than in Berggasse. There is only one thing: a collection to which there are no new additions is really dead."⁸ At this point, Freud was too ill to continue collecting, and due to the Nazi regulation, his friend Princess Marie Bonaparte could not bring anything more from Freud's Parisian antique dealer either. A couple of months later Freud himself died. His ashes were placed in one of his favorite ancient Greek urns.⁹ The collection has remained unchanged at Maresfield Gardens as a part of the Freud Museum.

"The Gods still exist"

Countless ancient objects surrounded Freud's office. The Egyptian stone reliefs, statuettes from Pompeian and Etruscan tombs, Greek and Roman vases, bowls and masses of figurines blanketed every surface. His patients were often surprised when they arrived for their first visit. "It was not a doctor's office," remarked the Wolf-man, "but rather of an archaeologist's study. Here were all kinds of statuettes and other unusual objects, which even the layman recognized as archaeological finds from ancient Egypt. Here and there on the walls were stone plaques representing various

⁷ See Engelman, "A Memoir," p. 138.

⁸ Freud's letter to Jeanne Lampl de Groot (October 8, 1938), in *Sigmund Freud: His Life in Pictures and Words*, ed. Ernst and Lucie Freud and Grubrich-Simitis, biographical sketch by K. R. Eissler (London: Andre Deutsch, 1978), p. 210.

⁹ Freud once told Marie Bonaparte, who had given him this urn, "It is a pity one cannot take it into one's grave." Although it was not a testament, Anna Freud decided to take this "wish" literally.

scenes of long-vanished epochs. . . . There was always a feeling of sacred peace and quiet in Freud's adjoining studies."¹⁰

Although every piece of his collection had a particular reason to be there, some of them gained Freud's special attention and ritualistic care.¹¹ These objects are easily pinpointable since they were concentrated around the two most important pieces of furniture in Freud's office: the legendary couch in the consulting room, and Freud's desk in his study, always clouded in tobacco smoke.¹²

Freud would sit at his desk and write for long hours into the morning. In front of him, on the desktop, figurines were stood up in two lines as a file of soldiers standing to attention. Among the twenty statuettes there was Osiris, the Egyptian god carved in bronze, a Roman Janus head looking at Freud "with his two faces in a very superior manner,"¹³ a Falconhead which was a lid from an Egyptian jar and, naturally, there was Aphrodite, too. To the right of the desk a small table stood with only two statuettes placed on it: a Chinese scholar which Freud greeted every day when he entered his study, and an Egyptian figure of Imhotep holding a papyrus scroll on his lap. He was a god of medicine representing the wisdom of the ages and reminding Freud to the truth of his profession. Each one of this silent "God-audience" were given a different personality. According to Anna Freud, her father compared one of them to Queen Victoria for its somewhat regal air.¹⁴

One of his latter patients, Hilda Doolittle¹⁵ the American poet, described Freud's study focusing on his desk: "I look around the room. . . . Priceless lovely objects are displayed here on the shelves to right and left to me. I have been told about the Professor, his family, his way of life . . . but no one told me that his room was lined with treasures. . . . There were the immemorial Gods ranged in their semi-circle on the Professor's table. . . .

¹⁰ The Wolf Man entered into analysis in 1910. Quoted from Gay, *A Life For Our Time*, pp. 170-71.

¹¹ Freud once told Anna that he "sacrificed" one of his statuettes by accident.

¹² Freud was a passionate smoker. "Collecting," Freud said to his physician, Max Schur, "is an addiction second in intensity only to my nicotine addiction." Quoted from Gay, *A Life For Our Time*, p. 170.

¹³ "The ancient gods still exist," wrote Freud, "because I obtained a few recently, amongst them a stone Janus who looks at me with his two faces in a very superior manner." *Freud to Fliess* (July 17, 1899), p. 362.

¹⁴ See Jack J. Spector, "Dr. Sigmund Freud, art collector," *Art News*, 75 (April 1975), p. 23.

¹⁵ Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) was in psychoanalysis in 1933-34.



Freud and His Antiquities, etching by Max Pollack, 1914.

There were these Gods, each the carved symbol of an idea or a deathless dream."¹⁶

The space around the couch was less crowded. When Freud decorated this area of his consulting room he had to think in terms of his patients. It was important not to disturb their view while they were lying on the couch during analysis. Freud chose a mounted photograph of Ramses II's Egyptian cliff temple¹⁷ at Abu Simbel to hang above the couch.¹⁸ Seemingly, there was nothing peculiar about it. Many visitors to Freud's consulting room described the way it was decorated in great detail but none of them took special notice of this photograph.¹⁹ For Freud, however, the temple at Abu Simbel symbolized his long-lasting oedipal struggle. The word Abu is almost identical to the Hebrew "abi" which means father, while Simbel is the phonetic way of writing the German word "symbol." This identification of the name Abu Simbel with the Freudian term "father figure" was suggested by Henry Fischer. Since Freud was so sensitive to homonyms, and the slips of the tongue, I think this idea is justified.

At the foot of the couch hung a plaster copy of the marble bas-relief of Gradiva, "the woman who steps along."²⁰ Freud's motivation to own this object derived from a novella by the German writer Wilhelm Jensen, first published in 1903. The protagonist of Jensen's *Gradiva*, Norbert Hanold, is an archeologist working in Italy. He has repressed his love for a girl, Zoe, whom he had grown up with. When Hanold visits an antique collection in Rome, he comes across a bas-relief of a young woman who recalls Zoe to him again, the girl he had loved and whose memory he had "buried" in his mind. Unconsciously, Hanold displaces his love for Zoe onto the ancient relief. He calls her "Gradiva" and hangs a plaster copy of it in a "privileged place on the wall in his study."²¹ A nightmare, later on in the book, takes him back to the first century to witness the death of "Gradiva" along with the destruction of Pompeii.²² Freud was fascinated by Jensen's play on the notions of "dead" and "alive" because it reminded him of his own antiqui-

¹⁶ Hilda Doolittle, *Tribute to Freud: Writing on the Wall, Advent* (New York: Basic Books, 1956), p. 98.

¹⁷ The temple was discovered by Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1815 and was excavated by Giovanni Battista Belzoni. It is interesting to note that Freud's father, Jacob Freud, was born in 1815.

¹⁸ Ramses II was the great imperial pharaoh who fought his way from southern Palestine to Syria in the thirteenth century B.C.

¹⁹ Except for one of his patients, Hilda Doolittle, who happened to visit the temple.

²⁰ The name *Gradiva* derives from the Latin word *gradus* which means "step."

²¹ Quoted from Jensen's *Gradiva* in Gay, *A Life For Our Time*, p. 318.

²² The destruction of Pompeii was in 79 A.D., when Mount Vesuvius erupted.

ties. In his paper²³ on Jensen's *Gradiva* he explored the similarity between repressed memories and buried cities, therefore developing his archaeological metaphor which will be discussed in section II below..

All roads lead to . . .

Freud was a systematic collector and a tireless student of archaeology. Different dealers visited him weekly and displayed their goods to him. Being a self-taught collector sometimes resulted in buying forgeries, so Freud became a regular "guest" at the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum where professionals would identify his uncertain pieces. One of his old friends, Emmanuel Loewy, professor of archaeology in Rome, visited him annually and brought news from the center of ancient cultures. The two of them would talk for hours on the archaeological development in Rome. Freud read every article in the papers about recent excavations and was overwhelmed by Heinrich Schliemann's discoveries in Troy.

Rita Ransohoff suggests that the life of an archaeologist might have had a great appeal for Freud,²⁴ and, in fact, he envied Schliemann. Her suggestion is based on a letter that Freud wrote to Ferenczi in 1922: "Strange secret yearnings rise in me — perhaps from my ancestral heritage — for a life of quite another kind: wishes from late childhood never to be fulfilled. . . ."²⁵ In contrast, Heinrich Schliemann's success in unearthing the ancient city fulfilled his childhood wish. In 1880 when Schliemann published his findings he decided to add a short autobiographical note to it. Here he explained that when he was ten years old he had read Homer's *Iliad* and had immediately fallen in love with every page of it. He was convinced that the wars in Troy had been historical. This conviction led him to follow Homer's descriptions in the actual excavations. Years later when Freud was about to complete his own psychoanalysis, he bought Schliemann's *Troy* and shared his joy with Wilhelm Fliess, his only friend during his long period of "splendid isolation"²⁶: "I have given myself Schliemann's *Troy* as a present. . . . I enjoyed the account of his childhood. . . . That

²³ "Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's *Gradiva*" (1904) as mentioned in Gay, *A Life For Our Time*, p. 319.

²⁴ See Ransohoff, "Sigmund Freud," in *Berggasse 19*, p. 111.

²⁵ As quoted in Max Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying* (New York: International Univ. Press, 1972), p. 485.

²⁶ Freud's own term for his solitude during his psychoanalysis between 1896 and 1899.

man was happy when he found the treasure of Priamus.²⁷ There is no other happiness than the one which one finds in the fulfillment of a childhood wish."²⁸

It is important to note that Freud, the collector and "archaeologist," was very much falling into line with contemporary fashion. During the nineteenth century there was a great deal of archaeological discoveries culminating in the new golden age of archaeology.²⁹ Many of these discoveries were now finding their way back to the exhibition rooms of Europe's major museums. With these developments there came a renewed interest in the heroes and art of classical times exciting the imagination of the new generation of Freud.

Freud's archaeological hunger, however, did not drive him outside the borders of Vienna for many years. It was not the lack of money that kept Freud back from traveling but a sense of guilt he felt towards his father. It emanated from Freud's juxtaposition of his own success and acknowledged talent with his father's poverty and ignorance. Traveling great distances was one of the luxuries that Freud's guilt would not allow him: "It must be that a sense of guilt is attached to the satisfaction of traveling so far, to go such a long way," writes Freud, "there is something about it that is wrong, that from the earliest times is forbidden. It has something to do with the child's criticism of his father, with the under-evaluation which takes the place of over-evaluation."³⁰ It was only after his father's death (1896) that Freud was ready to travel abroad and to visit Rome and its historical ruins which he had read and dreamt so much about. This sudden change of his attitude was due to his self-analysis which he felt was necessary after such an "important event, the most poignant loss, of a man's life."³¹ It was "an overwhelming experience" he wrote in 1901 when he eventually arrived to the

²⁷ Homer's detailed descriptions of the palace of Priamus was the main guide for Schliemann's excavations.

²⁸ See *Freud to Fließ* (May 28, 1899), p. 142.

²⁹ A great number of archaeologists were working on different sites of the Mediterranean simultaneously with Schliemann, e.g., the English archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans, who discovered the Minoan civilization on Crete, or Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, the famous Swiss orientalist, who discovered the above-mentioned temple at Abu Simbel.

³⁰ "A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis," in *Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and tr. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1950), vol. 5, p. 311.

³¹ See *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, tr. under the general editorship of James Strachey in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1953-74 [henceforth: Freud, S.E.] 4: 26 (1900).

ancient capital, "I felt I had to be in Rome at least once a year for days or weeks."³²

Although there is no direct evidence for it, it has been suggested that the death of Freud's father was also the reason for Freud's starting of his collection. John Forrester suggests that collecting as a cultural activity, is a response to the absence of the phallic object. In supporting his idea, Forrester applies Freud's own thesis about collecting: "When an old maid keeps a dog or an old bachelor collects snuffboxes, the former is finding a substitute for her need for a companion in marriage and the latter for his need for — a multitude of conquests."³³ Hence Freud may have started his collection in response to the death of his father to substitute for the lost father figure.

However, I intend to demonstrate that Freud's interest in archaeology was not simply incidental to his work, a hobby or a curiosity, but it had a much stronger influence on his whole intellectual effort as a psychoanalyst.

II

"In the face of the incompleteness of my analytic results, I had no choice but to follow the example of those discoverers whose good fortune it is to bring to the light of the day after their long burial the priceless though mutilated relics of antiquity. I have restored what is missing, taking the best models known to me from other analyses; but, like a conscientious archaeologist, I have not omitted to mention in each case where the authentic parts end and my constructions begins."³⁴

What is the Freudian Metaphor?

According to the Webster Dictionary, a metaphor is "a use of descriptive term which is not literally true in order to suggest resemblance." In the field of psychoanalysis the use of metaphor, simile, comparison and other forms of interpretations is very common. A suggestion has been made that psychoanalysis is to be divided into two major bodies of theories: theories about technique and treatment, which involve relatively fixed laws and rules

³² Freud to Zweig (February 7, 1931), in Freud, *Letters*, p. 402.

³³ Freud to Fliess (January 24, 1895), p. 110, quoted from John Forrester, "Mille tre: Freud and Collecting," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. J. Elsner and R. Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), pp. 232-33.

³⁴ "Fragment of analysis of a case of hysteria ('Dora')" in Freud, *S.E.* 8: 41 (1901).

of procedure; and a second category which, unlike the first, consists of a loose network of interpretative models upon which the analyst can draw.³⁵

In the second body of theory, the analyst is free to experiment, to imagine, and to use the example of a wide range of personal, cultural and professional experiences.

Thus for a psychoanalyst, education in any other field is useful. John Forrester, for example, is a psychoanalyst as well as a writer. He takes advantage of his refined sensitivity for words and language when he compares psychoanalysis to gossip as both being conversations taking place in the absence of the real.³⁶ Ellen H. Spitz, an analyst herself, has an interest in Italian Renaissance art. She notes the parallels between the process of psychoanalysis and that of restoring Florentine paintings in order to elucidate the problems of ethics in her profession: "When does the restorer [and psychoanalyst] cross that tenuous line between recreating the original work and obliterating it? How much guessing is too much guessing?"³⁷

Other analysts, who try to show that psychoanalysis is more like a religion than a science, have used the analogy that "psychoanalysis is like confession."³⁸

The way psychoanalysis works is still difficult to approach for the non-medical person. Interpretative models help the analyst to make points, terms and methods understandable for everyone by placing them into a more commonly known context, like gossip, language or even sport.³⁹ Analysts today, however, are in the position of having the choice of using their own interpretations. Freud was in a difficult position: he was to establish this "science," basing it on the one-to-one consultation between him and his patients. In other words, his psychoanalytic practice was from the start

35 See R. Michels, "The Scientific and Clinical Function of Psychoanalytic Theory," in *The Future of Psychoanalysis*, ed. A. Goldberg (New York: International Univ. Press, 1983), quoted from Ellen H. Spitz, "The Artistic Image and the Inward Gaze: Toward a Merging of Perspectives," *Psychoanalytic Preview*, 75 (1988), p. 112.

36 "Gossip always takes place in the absence of the parties being gossiped about. . . . Similarly, the rules of analysis require that all participating parties be absent." Forrester adds that in the practice of analysis, even the analyst is absent. This point recalls Freud's technique of sitting behind the analyst and, out of sight, not disturbing the process of free-associations with his presence. See John Forrester, "Psychoanalysis: Gossip, telepathy and/or science," in *The Seductions of Psychoanalysis: Freud, Lacan and Derrida* (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1990), pp. 246-47.

37 See Spitz, "The Artistic Image and the Inward Gaze," p. 115.

38 See John Forrester, "Michel Foucault and the history of psychoanalysis," in *The Seductions of Psychoanalysis*, pp. 299-300.

39 Woody Allen likes to compare psychoanalysis to sport because of the "weight" one can loose during both "activities."

as subjective as it could be, waiting to be developed into a widely accepted (objective) medical system. Freud had desperately sought for other already established fields and studies which he could use to explain and support his methods: he needed interpretative models. His knowledge of antique culture and archaeology became profitable. The subject of archaeology and the "objets d'art" seemed to be fashionable enough to convince not only the uneducated public, but also his patients and his colleagues.⁴⁰

Consequently, Freud's approach to his collection was scientific, too. As their location perfectly shows, he looked at his antiquities through psychoanalysis. Using them as interpretative models, Freud could elucidate certain observations in his analysis. In the case of the Rat-man Freud relates: "I then made some short observations upon the psychological differences between the conscious and the unconscious, and upon the fact that everything conscious was subject to a process of wearing away, while what was unconscious was relatively unchangeable; and I illustrated my remarks by pointing to the antiques standing about in my room. They were, in fact, I said, only objects found in a tomb, and their burial had been their preservation."⁴¹ These objects were, in fact, symbols; they supplemented Freud's unstable solutions and explanations. Spitz notes that works of art may come to serve, as they did in Freud's case, as primary sources of understanding about the human psyche. "From time to time" he says "it may suddenly occur to a therapist that he has in treatment a Prometheus or a Cassandra"⁴² or as Leavy suggests "an Aeneas on the couch."⁴³

The term "Freudian Metaphor," however, refers to one specific metaphor which Freud created and held onto from the beginning of his psychoanalytical efforts until the end of his life: that is the archaeological metaphor. It encompasses the various ways in which Freud, the excavator of the mind, compared psychoanalysis to archaeology.

⁴⁰ In the conclusion of this article I will argue that Freud was wrong when he gave such a significance to archaeology. Inspite of all the discoveries throughout the nineteenth century, the techniques of archaeology were unknown to the public. As it turns out, even Freud, who read so much about archaeology, was unaware of the advanced archaeological methods of his age.

⁴¹ "A case of obsessional neuroses," in *Collected Papers* 3: 314 (1909).

⁴² See Spitz, "The Artistic Image and the Inward Gaze," p. 113.

⁴³ See Leavy, "Demythologizing Oedipus," p. 444, quoted from Spitz, "The Artistic Image and the Inward Gaze," p. 113.

Developing the Freudian Metaphor

The known history of Freud's interest in antiquities goes back to his teens when he entered the Gymnasium in Vienna. The teaching in his school was centered around the culture of the antique world, with a special emphasis on Latin, Greek and ancient history. He learned to read Homer, Plato, Virgil, Horace and others, always expressing "some pity for those who had to be satisfied with the translations."⁴⁴ Like his later "ego ideal" Schliemann, he was captivated by Homer's Iliad, too. In his final exams Freud was required to translate into German forty-three verses of Sophocles' *Oedipus rex*⁴⁵ which was to become one of his principle texts of his psychoanalytic years.

Freud's extensive humanistic education had an influence on his aesthetic taste in collecting, but more important, it set the stage for his metaphorical style. He used Greek names for psychoanalytic concepts and called on ancient history and mythology for validation of his discoveries. "Mythology," Freud wrote in his paper "The question of Lay Analysis," "may give . . . the courage to believe psychoanalysis."⁴⁶

From the mythology of ancient Crete, Freud related Ariadne's thread to the umbilical cord, the labyrinth to anal birth fantasies and the twisting paths to the bowels.⁴⁷ In Dora's case he shifts with ease from the relationship between Frau K. and her younger female rival to Medea and Creusa, whose emotional situation paralleled those in his case history: "When Dora stayed with the K's, she used to share a bedroom with Frau K. and the husband was quartered elsewhere. She had been the wife's confidant and adviser in all the difficulties of her married life. Medea had been content that Creusa should make friends with her two children."⁴⁸ Freud does not even interrupt the narration as if "it were self-understood that mythological heroines belong in case histories of neuroses."⁴⁹

Freud's major work, *The Interpretations of Dreams*, is full of insights gained from classical references. The motto, arguably the most significant

⁴⁴ Quoted after Suzanne Cassirer Bernfeld, "Freud and Archaeology," *American Imago*, 8 (June 1951), p. 113.

⁴⁵ At Freud's Gymnasium only the very best students took examinations in Greek tragedy.

⁴⁶ Freud, *S.E.* 20: 211 (1926).

⁴⁷ Freud, *S.E.* 22: 25 (1927).

⁴⁸ Freud, *S.E.* 4: 16 (1901).

⁴⁹ See Bernfeld, "Freud and Archaeology," p. 109.

lines in the whole book, Freud borrowed from Vergilius's *Aeneis*.⁵⁰ Later he quotes Aristotle as the first Greek author to assert that dreams are products of the dreamer's mind rather than messages sent by the gods.⁵¹ In analyzing his avoidance of Rome (see section I above), Freud compared himself to Hannibal who had promised his father, Hamilcar, to march on Rome.⁵² Despite his splendid military solution to lead the herd of elephants across the Alps, Hannibal had stopped outside Rome, being unable to take the city which had defeated his father. Towards the end of his life, he interpreted a dream of his in which he had been buried in an Etruscan grave. This dream did not only express his death-fear but also satisfied his archaeological interest.⁵³

Freud adopted Greek and Latin for his general concepts as well as for some specific terms. The most famous of these is the "Oedipus complex," identified in 1897.⁵⁴ It was named after the hero of Thebes who had murdered his father, Laios, then married his mother. "The Greek myth seizes on a compulsion which everybody recognizes because he has felt traces of it in himself," explains Freud.⁵⁵ In other words, Freud traced back contemporary man's behavior and dreams, not only to his own childhood but to the cultural past. This idea gives us a reason why Freud called the childhood of his patients "prehistoric" and "ancient." The importance of this discovery for Freud is visible throughout his collection: the half-lion Sphinx from the myth of Oedipus appeared more than once at different locations of his office. One of them was a reproduction of Ingres' painting of Oedipus interrogating the Sphinx,⁵⁶ significantly placed right next to the couch, below the plaster copy of *Gradiva* (see section I).

50 "Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo" (If the gods remain helpless, I will rouse Acheron — author's translation), the epigraph to *The Interpretation of Dreams*. See Freud, *S.E.* (4, 1900).

51 Freud, *S.E.* 4: 16 (1900).

52 Freud, *S.E.* 4: 197 (1900).

53 Freud, *S.E.* 21: 17 (1927).

54 There are two other terms that I have found through my research: Freud used *Eros*, the Greek word for love, as libido or "life force" in his paper on "Analysis Terminable and Interminable." See Freud, *S.E.*, 23: 216-53 (1937). *Thanatos*, the Greek word for "death," stood for the "death instinct"; although the word itself does not appear in Freud's writings, Laurie Adams suggests that he used it in a conversation. See Laurie Adams, "Freud and Archaeology," in *Conference on the History of Psychoanalysis* (London: Freud Museum, 1989), p. 3.

55 Quoted from Edwin R. Wallace, *Freud and Anthropology: A History and Reappraisal* (New York: International Univ. Press, 1983), p. 8.

56 The original of Ingres' *Oedipus and the Sphinx* has been in the Louvre since the second half of the nineteenth century. Freud had probably bought the reproduction as



Oedipus and the Sphinx, painting by Ingres, 1808.

early as 1885 while he was studying at the Salpêtrière in Paris under Jean-Martin Charcot. He often visited the collection of the Louvre and wrote to his fiancé that for him "these things have more historical than aesthetic interest."

"Saxa loquuntur!"

After a few years of practising as an analyst, Freud narrowed down his metaphoric approach, creating one "mighty metaphor"⁵⁷ which came to be known as the Freudian Metaphor: the analogy of archaeology and psychoanalysis. To understand the archaeological metaphor is to understand the actual process of psychoanalysis, as Freud pointed out in his lecture on hysteria in 1896. Here, Freud notes that, like the archaeologist, the psychoanalyst begins with visible remains, such as symptoms, clears away the rubbish which has piled up over the years, and searches for buried material, memories:

Imagine that an explorer arrives in a little-known region where his interest is aroused by an expanse of ruins, with remains of walls, fragments of columns, and tablets with half-effaced and unreadable inscriptions. He may content himself with inspecting what lies exposed to view, with questioning the inhabitants . . . who live in the vicinity, about what tradition tells them of the history and meaning of these archaeological remains, and with noting down what they tell him — and he may then proceed on his journey. But he may act differently. He may have brought picks, shovels and spades with him, and he may set the inhabitants to work with these implements. Together with them he may start upon the ruins, clear away the rubbish, and, beginning from the visible remains, uncover what is buried. If his work is crowned with success, the discoveries are self-explanatory; the fragments of columns can be filled out into a temple; the numerous inscriptions, which, by good luck, may be bilingual, reveal an alphabet and a language, and, when they have been deciphered and translated, yield undreamed-of information about the events of the remote past, to commemorate which monuments were built. *Saxa loquuntur! "Stones speak!"*⁵⁸

The "speaking stones" is probably a reference to Champollion's recent decipherment of the Rosetta Stone, which he began in the 1820s and finally revealed the meaning of its Egyptian hieroglyphics. It shows an element which is equally important to both archaeology and psychoanalysis: lan-

57 Donald Kuspit's term for Freud's archaeological metaphor, as quoted in *Sigmund Freud and Art: His Personal Collection of Antiquities*, intr. Peter Gay, ed. Lynn Gamwell and Richard Wells (London: Thames in association with the State Univ. of New York and the Freud Museum, 1989), p. 133.

58 "The Aetiology of Hysteria," in Freud, *S.E.* 3: 192 (1896).

guage. It is through the links made by verbal associations that the analyst makes his way to the buried material. In archaeology, as in psychoanalysis, language is a source of understanding. If we compare a civilization, a pre-literate civilization with one whose language is known and translated, the enormous advantage of linguistic knowledge becomes visible. Similarly, the patient who can free-associate, makes verbal connections, and can be receptive to the analyst's verbal interpretations, is far more readily analyzable than the one who cannot. In fact, language is so vital for psychoanalysis that some "post-modern" writers have redefined psychoanalysis as "a technique of speech."⁵⁹ And, as Jacques Lacan put it, the heart of the function of speech in analysis is to do with the fact "that there is no speech without reply, even if it is met only by silence."⁶⁰

This "silence," however, did not exist during Freud's analysis. No matter how speechless or quiet the session became, the antiquities were always there to talk to both Freud and his patient. When the patient entered the analysis to rediscover his own origins and buried history, he was unexpectedly confronted by hundreds of eloquent figurines telling about their own past. This atmosphere must have been stimulating for the patient's mind, but did not it also influence and control the process of free associations? Could these associations be really free?⁶¹

The antiquities' primary purpose was to help Freud himself, not so much his patients. They supported and secured not only his ideas and solutions, but also his psychoanalytic language. He could lean on them. For this linguistic "reliance," Donald Kuspit compares Freud to a stuttering Moses "who had to rely on classical antiquity as an Aaron⁶² who could give him a silvery tongue, who would honeycoat his aggressive scientific intentions."⁶³

The Dead are Alive

One of the recurring themes in Freud's collection of antiquities is "death." To name a few instances: the little marble name plaques from a

⁵⁹ See Forrester, "Psychoanalysis," in *The Seductions of Psychoanalysis*, p. 243.

⁶⁰ See Forrester, "What the psychoanalyst does with words: Austin, Lacan and the speech acts of psychoanalysis," *ibid.*, p. 141.

⁶¹ Even though Freud arranged the objects around the couch in such a way that it would not disturb the patient's view during analysis, the overall atmosphere of the consulting room was too powerful to be ignored.

⁶² According to Exodus (Ex. 4. 10-15), Aaron was Moses' older brother, the highest priest. Moses was "slow of speech," so Aaron was appointed his minister and spokesman.

⁶³ See Gay, *Sigmund Freud and Art*, p. 144.

Roman sarcophagus, the Greek and Etruscan burial urns, especially the one containing ancient bones, an engraving after Antoine Wiertz's *Burial Alive*⁶⁴ and the Egyptian works⁶⁵ all dealt with the same subject-matter. Max Schur, Freud's personal doctor and close friend,⁶⁶ recalls in his *mémoires* that until his last moment, Freud wrestled with the problem of "beyond": "The meaning of death — the necessity to die and the wish to live — engaged him, both as a theoretical psychological concept and as an individual fate of each human."⁶⁷

Throughout his life, Freud faced the loss of many dear friends and relatives who died by either some disease spread by the war or by anti-Semitic violence. The death of his youngest grandson Heinele, however, threw him off his ever-stable balance: "he [Heinele] stood for all my children and other grandchildren. . . . I no longer take pleasure in life. . . . He meant the future to me and thus has taken the future away with him." Being brought up as a Jewish child, Freud understood that death is nothing but the end of life — no resurrection. Therefore the death of his grandson had robbed him of his last chance at immortality. The only thing he had left that represented some sense of continuity, resurrection or immortality⁶⁸ was his collection: as I quoted earlier on, pointing at his antiquities, Freud said to the Rat-man that "they were, in fact . . . only objects found in a tomb, and their burial had been their preservation."⁶⁹

Reading Jensen's *Gradiva* with a pencil in his hand, Freud wrote "*schön*" in the margin by a passage which reminded him of the archaeological metaphor: when Hanold finally meets his forgotten love Zoe, she listens to his story of the *Gradiva*⁷⁰ and concludes: ". . . someone must die first, in order to become alive . . . for archaeology that is doubtless necessary."⁷¹

⁶⁴ Painted in 1854.

⁶⁵ The Egyptians were deeply concerned with the fate of their dead.

⁶⁶ It was Schur whom Freud asked to end his life "when the time had come." He must have had the clearest view on how Freud thought of death.

⁶⁷ See Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying*, p. 136.

⁶⁸ It may be the reason why Freud excluded Jewish objects. While Jews saw death as the end of life and nothing else, the Egyptians were deeply concerned with the fate of their dead and the idea of after-life. Moreover, Freud treated his objects as "Gods," which is a well-known historical sin of the Jews, but maybe not of Freud's own Jewish predecessors who's leader, as Freud stated, was Moses, the *Egyptian* nobleman. For an indepth discussion on Freud's view on Moses' origin, see the Freud Museum's record of the talk "If Moses was an Egyptian." Cairo: *International Conference on Psychiatry*, 1988.

⁶⁹ "A case of obsessional neuroses," in *Collected Papers* (3: 314, 1909).

⁷⁰ See above, "The Gods still exist."

⁷¹ Quoted from Gay, *A Life for Our Time*, p. 321.

Then, in his paper on the novel, he explores the depth of Zoe's statement by saying that the burial of Pompeii is similar to the repression of memories: both archaeological and mental materials are "inaccessible and preserved at the same time" and they can "re-emerge through the work of spades."⁷² Freud's feelings that the "dead lived" in his collection is clearly expressed in his underlining in his copy of Burckhardt's *Cicerone*: "What the eye perceives in this and other Greek edifices, are not mere stones, but living beings."⁷³

The Futurist painter Umberto Boccioni stated that "archaeologists" were "infected with chronic necrophilia."⁷⁴ Indeed, death is the subject most often associated with archaeology: the excavator who seeks for the remains of the dead. Was Freud, then, a "chronic necrophiliac" of the mind?

Archaeological Sites: the Dream

Excavations, wherever they take place, are activities driven by curiosity. The archaeological metaphor signals psychoanalysis' "sceptical" attitude towards everyday appearances to the extent that it refuses to believe in surface values. Uncovering unusual findings and unexpected meanings teach both archaeologist and psychoanalyst to be open to novelties. When Freud first succeeded in digging up childhood memories through the process of free associations, he wrote to Fliess: ". . . a scene from the primal period, which answers all requirements . . . it is everything at once. . . . I hardly dare to believe it yet. It is as if Schliemann had again discovered Troy which before him was considered to be a myth."⁷⁵ Without an enormous amount of professional curiosity no such discoveries could be made.⁷⁶

The archaeological metaphor also allows Freud to entitle himself "the archaeologist of the mind." This was probably one of the factors which sustained his recurring "identity confusion"⁷⁷: "If I cannot be an archaeologist,

72 *Ibid.*

73 Quoted after Spector, "Dr. Sigmund Freud, art collector," p. 26.

74 Boccioni calls "archaeologists" those traditional Italian artists who were obsessed with old narratives. Quoted from Kuspit, "A Mighty Metaphor," in Gay, *Sigmund Freud and Art*, p. 143.

75 See Freud to Fliess (December 21, 1899).

76 Curiosity — while a main characteristic of man and a driving force of every development — was especially characteristic of the late nineteenth-century culture.

77 Questioning the rightness of his choice of becoming a doctor, and not an archaeologist. Other factors have mainly to do with being a Jew in anti-Semitic Vienna. It meant a complete crisis of national identity. Many Jews were trying to purge them-

then I will reconceptualize what I am doing as archaeology — of the mind."⁷⁸ In fact, Freud even spoke like an excavator or a museum director during the analytical sessions, using archaeological terminology. When a patient of his became anxious and only handed him a segment of memory, Freud replied: "Yes, this fragment might possibly belong to the period about which we are curious but it is not precise enough and not complete. We have to go on digging and wait until we find something more representative."⁷⁹

For the excavator of the mind, the most obvious archaeological sites are dreams, free associations and slips of the tongue. These are the right places to begin digging for buried memories. However, in dreams, as Freud explained in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the suppressed and forbidden childhood-wishes can break through easier than anywhere else.⁸⁰ He compared the symbolism of dreams to the Egyptian hieroglyphics and certain devices of the dream work to those of that ancient script. Freud acted as if he was a Champollion of dreams. In his library there are several volumes devoted to the understanding of Egyptian hieroglyphics and cuneiform inscriptions.

One of Freud's childhood dreams proves that he was trying to understand the Egyptian hieroglyphics even before he learned to read. This dream came to be known as the Egyptian bird dream, and is reported as follows:

It is dozens of years since I myself had a true anxiety-dream. . . . It was a very vivid one, and in it I saw my beloved mother, with a peculiarly peaceful, sleeping expression on her features, being carried into the room by two . . . people with birds' beaks and laid upon the bed. . . . The strangely draped and unnaturally tall figures with birds' beaks were derived from the illustrations to Philippson's Bible. I fancy they must have been gods with falcon's heads from an ancient Egyptian funerary relief. . . . The expression on my mother's features in the dream was copied from the view I had had of my grandfather a

themselves from the negative characteristics currently associated with Jews by converting to Catholicism. Despite all the professional, social and political disadvantages he had to deal with, becoming a "Westernized Jew" did not occur to Freud.

⁷⁸ Quoted from Wallace, *Freud and Anthropology*, p. 7.

⁷⁹ Quoted from Bernfeld, "Freud and Archaeology," p. 111.

⁸⁰ Freud, *S.E.* 4: 247 (1901).

few days before his death as he lay snoring in a coma . . . my mother was dying. . . .⁸¹

The Philipson Bible was republished in 1858 and represented a standard work for the emancipated Jews of the nineteenth century. Thus it found its way into the house of Jacob Freud. Freud himself reported later that he knew the Bible and studied it much, even before he could read. He treated the family Bible as if it was a picture-book because of its woodcuts illustrating the text. Amongs the illustrations there were Egyptian jewels, sacrificial animals and Gods with falcon-heads. A figurine of the Falconhead on Freud's desk confirms that these Egyptian hieroglyphs⁸² came in time to signify the symbolism of dreams.

Referring to Nietzsche's assertion that in dreams "some primaeval relic of humanity is at work which we can not scarcely reach any longer by a direct path," Freud notes that "the analysis of dreams will lead . . . to a knowledge of man's archaic heritage, of what is psychically innate to him. Dreams and neuroses seemed to have preserved more mental antiquities than we could have imagined possible; so that psychoanalysis may claim a high place among the sciences which are concerned with the reconstruction of the earliest and most obscure periods of the beginnings of the human race."⁸³

Stratification of the Mind

Freud was so captivated by the stratification of archaeological sites (in a literal sense) that he started to search for similar layer-structures in the psyche. He came to the conclusion that memories are equally stratified but are different in character: a civilization is built on top of the one before, the ruins of which lie on top of the ruins of the one before and so on. In other words, a building, a city or a civilization evolves in a certain sequence, which is from the ground up. Conversely, the psyche evolves unevenly. In

⁸¹ The Egyptian bird dream, Freud decided, fulfilled his wish of making his mother his own. See Freud, *S.E.* (5: 583, 1901), quoted from Eva M. Rosenfeld, "Dream and Vision: Some remarks on Freud's Egyptian bird dream." London: *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 37 (1956) pp. 97-98.

⁸² It is interesting to look at the dictionary definition of Hieroglyph: "1. figure of an object standing for a word, syllable, or sound as used in ancient Egyptian and other writing; 2. secret or enigmatic symbol; 3. writing difficult to make out." Isn't this a perfect analogy for the symbolism of dreams?

⁸³ Quoted from a catalogue in the archive of the Freud Museum.

dreams,⁸⁴ for example, a mixture of memory-traces exist alongside each other, one dating from early childhood, another from most recent experiences. This distinction between the even and the uneven is to do with historical sequence and with the fact that the patient is alive while the buried civilizations are not.⁸⁵

To illustrate this distinction, in *Civilization and its Discontents* Freud creates a peculiar picture of Rome, using its various archaeological layers:

Let us make the fantastic supposition that Rome was not a human dwelling-place but a mental entity with just as long and varied a past history; that is in which nothing once constructed had perished and all the earliest stages of development had survived alongside the latest. This would mean that in Rome the palaces of the Ceasars were still standing on the Palatine. Where the Palazzo Caffarelli stands there would also be, without its being removed, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, not merely in its latest form, moreover, as the Romans saw it but also in its earliest shape, when it still wore an Etruscan design and was adorned with terra cotta antefixae. On the Piazza of the Pantheon we should find not only the Pantheon of today as bequeathed to us by Hadrian but on the same site also Agrippa's original edifice. And the observer would need merely to shift the focus of his eyes perhaps or change his position, in order to call up a view of either the one or the other.⁸⁶

If we imagine Rome as a mental entity, he continues, and try to represent historical sequence in spatial terms, "we can only do it by juxtaposition in space."⁸⁷

Freud had attempted to elucidate the same concept some forty years earlier, when he cited Raphael's great fresco in the Vatican, *The School of Athens*. Here, several schools/scholars of Greek philosophy exist in the same time and place. By painting himself among the figures of Leonardo and Michelangelo, Raphael combined different eras of Greek history with his own time. Thus "the juxtaposition of ages is possible in painting as well as in fantasy, but not in the ruins of a civilization."⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Dreams are stratified, too, because they have more than one meaning: "Every dream was linked in its manifest content with recent experiences and in its latent content with the most ancient experiences." See Freud, *S.E.* 4: 218 (1901).

⁸⁵ See Freud, *S.E.* (23: 260, 1937).

⁸⁶ "Civilization and its Discontents," in Freud, *S.E.* 21: 68-69 (1929).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* (21: 70, 1929).

⁸⁸ See Adams, "Freud and Archaeology," pp. 8-9.

Bernfeld suggests that Freud's great interest in the layer structure of both ancient cities and mental apparatus goes back to early childhood efforts to understand his family structure and "to master its emotional demands."⁸⁹

Indeed, the three generations living together in Freiberg did create a complicated family structure: Jacob Freud (in his forties) and his two sons from his previous marriage; Jacob's second wife, Sigmund Freud's mother (about the same age as her foster-sons); Jacob's grandchildren, the children of his two older sons (about the same as Sigmund Freud). The grandchildren and the three years old Sigmund were, in fact, nephew, niece and uncle but for "practical purposes" they were brothers and sisters. There was also an old nurse⁹⁰ who, though treated as a member of the family, belonged to a different world: she spoke Czech, was a peasant and was a Catholic.

The concept of the layered raises another aspect of the archaeological metaphor. In "Construction in Analysis" Freud warns of similar sources of error in the two fields. The archaeologist has to determine the age of his finds and decide whether they correspond to the level at which they are found. The psychoanalyst deals with levels of childhood development; one of his tasks is to match the remembered or reconstructed event with the level at which it occurred. In regard to these reconstructions, Freud pointed out that it is the responsibility of both archaeologist and psychoanalyst to identify what is real material and what is construction. Although a certain amount of "guessing" is necessary in any reconstructive process, an error in matching the material with the right level may, in both fields, result in an incorrect interpretation, distorting the "historical truth."⁹¹

However, concerning the determination of the age of finds, Freud points out that the analyst works under better conditions for several reasons. First, what he is dealing with is "not something destroyed but something that is still alive": the patient's behavior during the analytical session,⁹² for example, is a kind of first-hand information that the archaeologist is lacking. In other words, while the analyst is a contemporary of the events, the archaeologist can only dream about what it would be like to excavate the remains of his time hundreds of years later. Second, the archaeologist deals with destroyed objects "of which large and important portions have quite

⁸⁹ See Bernfeld, "Freud and Archaeology," p. 120.

⁹⁰ In Freud's self-analysis, the nurse is the earliest important figure from Freiberg. When she first reappeared in his dream, Freud called her the "prehistoric old woman."

⁹¹ "Construction in Analysis," *S.E.* 23: 259-60 (1937).

⁹² For instance, repetitions of reactions dating from childhood.

certainly been lost, by mechanical violence, by fire and by plundering. No amount of effort can result in their discovery and lead to their being united with the surviving remains." Memories, on the other hand, are unchangably preserved: "Here we are regularly met by a situation which with the archaeological object occurs only in such rare circumstances as those of Pompeii or of the tomb of Tutankhamun. All of the essentials are preserved. Even things that seem completely forgotten are present somehow and somewhere."⁹³ Freud also adds to the list of "Why is psychoanalysis a higher science than archaeology" that the psychical objects are incomparably more complicated than the excavator's material ones.⁹⁴

Far from being ironic, I do think that Freud had — whether consciously or not — gradually proved that psychoanalysis was a better science than archaeology. Is not there something, as Donald Kuspit put it, "smugly triumphant"⁹⁵ in Freud's way of privileging psychoanalysis? It was as if he had not only been envious of Schliemann's discovery of Troy and thus of his childhood wish-fulfillment,⁹⁶ but was envious of the accepted position of the whole of archaeology as a science. Indeed, Freud used archaeology's success to make his own science more popular. To outdo archaeology must have been a dream of his from the start.

Revision of the Freudian Metaphor

Before tearing to pieces Freud's archaeological metaphor, I want to make clear that it works for me and I am fond of it. Those recent critics who are of the opinion that "we have to say goodbye to the Freudian Metaphor,"⁹⁷ have made the same mistake as Freud himself: they have treated the metaphor as a system. Metaphors are not systems or theories, they should not be expected to fit in every respect. Metaphors are meant to highlight features that are important in a given context of use. More basic metaphors may fit in more respects. Psychoanalysis and archaeology, however, are both far too complicated in their own unique way to be joined in a perfect metaphor. One has to be somewhat indulgent when analyzing such a com-

93 "Construction in Analysis," Freud, *S.E.* 23: 258-60 (1937).

94 Through examining the stratification of the mind, Freud came to another crucial difference between archaeological and psychoanalytical excavations. For the archaeologist the reconstruction is the "aim and end" of his job, while for the analyst construction is "only a preliminary labor."

95 See Kuspit, "A Mighty Metaphor," p. 139.

96 See section I: "All roads lead to . . ."

97 See P. Donald Spence, *The Freudian Metaphor: Toward Paradigm Change in Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1987), p. 180.

prehensive metaphor as Freud's. Likewise, Freud himself could have been less perfectionist in constructing the archaeological metaphor, even if it had gone against the nature of a "good psychoanalyst."

One of the main criticisms of the Freudian Metaphor has to do with Freud's fallacy in stating that the conditions under which the analyst works are any better. Freud thought that while material objects were destroyed by the very process of excavating ("by mechanical violence, by fire and by plundering"), buried memories could be unearthed unchangably. Donald Spence's recent studies have shown this conviction to be wrong: the process of psychoanalytical excavation leads to the same distortion of memories. He explains that memories of events are originally in a highly visual form that must be rendered into words to be communicated to the analyst. This "picture-word translation" will necessarily be incomplete and selective: "Thus the very act of talking about the past tends to crystallize it in specific but somewhat arbitrary language, and this language serves, in turn, to distort the early memory. More precisely, the new description becomes the early memory."⁹⁸ Thus, paradoxically, it is language, the most important tool of psychoanalysis, which modifies the real experiences, the "narrative truth."⁹⁹ Spence's critique, however, does not defeat the archaeological metaphor, but adds to it: both material and mental buried objects are distorted by the process of excavation.

There are other factors which can also distort the "narrative truth." The patient tends to describe memories or dreams in an incorrect way so that they fit the context of the story. For his part, the analyst cannot help but focus selectively on pieces that can form a coherent story. The "evenly hovering attention"¹⁰⁰ that Freud prescribed as one of the main qualities that a good analyst must maintain, simply does not exist. Such distortions cannot be corrected, because "there is no memory record, no museum copy to refer to when in doubt."¹⁰¹ Psychoanalysis is about an individual dealing with another individual which creates a unique situation in every single case. No matter how well (scientifically) intended, the analyst can therefore never achieve the objectivity of the archaeologist. In short, psychoanalysis can not be a science.

⁹⁸ See P. Donald Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth* (New York: Norton, 1982), p. 92.

⁹⁹ Though he did not draw such conclusions like Spence, I think Freud was very much aware of the difficulties in the "picture-word translation." This is what he tried to avoid through using his antiquities for giving explanations to his patients.

¹⁰⁰ See "On Begining the Treatment" (1913), quoted from Gay, *A Life For Our Time*, p. 299.

¹⁰¹ See Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth*, p. 121.

To have psychoanalysis accepted as a science was not only a egotistical dream of Freud, but was also a political claim. Subjectivity, in his case, might be identified as voicing Jewish opinion. Therefore Freud tried to eliminate his subjectivity to protect himself from the anti-Semites who could drive him to the wall for it. Freud therefore asserted that psychoanalysis, like archaeology and other sciences, is free of ideologies and of any political stands.¹⁰²

Sciences, however, are not free of political stands. Not even such a seemingly objective science as archaeology. The Associated Press reported a recent public debate in France in an article called "Louvre digs caught in the middle of French political-archaeological fight."¹⁰³ Two teams of archaeologists were digging for vestiges of ancient Paris in the backyards of the Louvre. One team was headed by a member of the French Communist Party and aimed to uncover "working-class" quarters: "We are seeing how they lived, what they ate and what they did for a living," explained the leader of the group to the journalist. The other team was headed by a conservative "staunch anti-communist." They were unearthing a medieval king's dungeon: "The dungeon symbolizes the state. . . . It is where the king stored his treasures . . . and, of course, his most prized prisoners," said the conservative leader. The public fight started when the Communist leader declared that "there is an archaeology of the left and one of the right." According to him, the other group was "rightist" because they were interested "only in the powerful." Thus we have returned to the (revised) Freudian Metaphor: the "evenly hovering attention" cannot be achieved either by the psychoanalyst or by the archaeologist.

Objects or Products

At the end of the previous chapter I retitled both material and mental objects products. I believe that this term is much better suited to the Freudian Metaphor than the term "object."

"Object" is a less specific term than "product." The fundamental difference between "object" and "product" lies in how the word "object" concerns itself with the item in question, whereas the word "product," in its strict sense, concerns itself with the item's origin, the producer and the process of its making. Therefore an "object" can survive in any context. However, a product loses its value as a product if removed from its origin. Let me

102 See "The Question of a Weltanschauung," in Freud, *S.E.* 22: 158-82 (1933).

103 *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* (Nov. 1984), p. 58-A, reference from Steen F. Larsen, "Remembering and the Archaeological Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* (Risskov: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1987), p. 198.

demonstrate this difference by taking a concrete example from Freud's antiquities.

The little Osiris-head in the middle of Freud's desk had originally belonged to an Egyptian man who had lived around 1,500 B.C. The Egyptians believed in an afterlife; when someone died, his family would fill his tomb with his personal belongings so that he could use them later. It was believed that Osiris, God of the underworld, would judge whether a person would go on to have an afterlife or not. Therefore different figures of Osiris were often placed in tombs to gain his favor; in this particular case, it was an Osiris-head, which was unearthed in the eighteenth century. During the nineteenth century, as with many of these small statuettes, it was brought to France, where a dealer, Robert Lustig, bought it and sold it to his ever-faithful customer, Sigmund Freud. Freud placed the Osiris-head among his favorite antiquities on his desk. After the Freuds moved to Maresfield Gardens in London, Paula, the maid, arranged his antiquities in much the same way as Freud had kept them in Vienna. That is exactly where the Osiris head can be found today.

This short story of the Osiris-head shows how often the context of an "object" can change; religious object, object of curiosity, object offered for sale, object to remind and remember and a piece of history — all being equally valued. A memory, however, cannot keep its value if removed from its context. The only way we can understand "the Egyptian bird dream" is to know that it belongs to Freud, to know about the *Philippson Bible* and about his interest in archaeology. A remembered episode is only an episode in the wider context of a more extended chain of events. It derives its significance from the contexts in which it is embedded.

Thus psychoanalysis is doubtlessly dealing with "products" of the mind rather than "objects" of the mind, because its final goal is to understand about the human mind as a whole. To revise the Freudian Metaphor, let me pose the "object or product" question in a different way: is archaeology about antiquities or about people?

Modern excavation techniques are concerned with recording the "contextual evidence." "Digging" is "evil,"¹⁰⁴ because it destroys, not only as Freud thought, the actual objects, but the context, too, in which the "objects" are found. Contextual evidence, Spence points out, is as important as the object itself. Steen Larsen uses a very descriptive analogy to stress the significance of the context of an archaeological find: "Whether an instrument for compression is found in the kitchen or in the dungeon may

¹⁰⁴ Quotes from Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth*, pp. 102-18.

decide if it shall be considered a tool for sausage making or for torturing prisoners."¹⁰⁵

Context provides the background for an object and helps to interpret it. Everything in the archaeological site is located by horizontal and vertical lines, drawings are made and photographs are taken at different stages of the work so that the relationship between object and its context can be reconstructed in the end of the excavation. Likewise, the context of memories is equally important as memories, and should be recorded: the conditions under which people live and events that happen to them are the key-information for understanding their psyche. (Spence states, however, that Freud was naive to think that archaeologists were "digging for objects." It was, he says, already out of date among archaeologists when Freud worked out his psychoanalytic methods. Nowadays, sometimes whole blocks of the excavation field are removed to the laboratory. Some super-modern archaeologist even leave some part of the excavation field untouched so that later investigations can study it with new methods.)¹⁰⁶

The main reason why I think the Freudian Metaphor works is because both archaeology and psychoanalysis are about people. The buried civilization which the archaeologist aims to uncover through its buried works of art, buildings, sculptures and written language are all human products. Similarly, psychoanalysis deals with fantasies, dreams and memories, which are all products of the human mind. Freud was a collector of anything that people left their fingerprints on, be it dreams, jokes, histories or antiquities.

¹⁰⁵ See Larsen, "Remembering and the Archaeological Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, p. 192.

¹⁰⁶ For further description of the methods of modern archaeology, see *ibid.*, p. 193